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THE
VEIL WITHDRAWN

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THE
VEIL WITHDRAWN ;
AN ESSAY
ON THE
FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD CHAPTERS
OF GENESIS.

BY M. E. STONE.

"But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon
their heart."—2 Cor. iii. 15.

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THE VEIL WITHDRAWN.

WHAT apology shall I make to the public for thus placing my own personal views of this portion of Holy Writ before them? Be it understood that I have no desire to force any of my readers to adopt them; but, having read so many controversies and speculations respecting the literal interpretation of the Mosaic cosmogony, and the apparent contradiction it offers to the science of geology, I am tempted to cast my own opinions into the scale with those of others, who must feel, if they do not say, that many passages of the Old Testament, as well as the New, contain a twofold meaning, the literal language being used to convey and clothe some beautiful spiritual sense; and I sincerely hope that by so doing, God helping me, I may succeed in throwing some light upon what at present appears to be a most difficult question to solve. If it is not given me to accomplish this aim, I will spare myself the conviction of having done

any harm to the cause of religion, by carefully guarding against confusing the reader, or bringing forward any theory which I am unable to corroborate and confirm by texts extracted from the Bible. It is to this scriptural corroboration that I look for support. Resolved to base every observation strictly upon it, I am content to leave the success or failure of this little volume in the hands of an all-wise Power.

Not having, as yet, read any of the Colenso doctrines relating to the Pentateuch, I do not either, knowingly, refute or uphold them in these pages; nor am I anxious to do either one or the other, my chief aim being only to show how the language of the chapters I have taken in hand may be made to support scientific facts "such as have been made known during the last few years," or, if not actually supporting them, be rendered thoroughly neutral by being deprived of every antagonistic quality and sense whatever.

Geological discoveries have rendered it necessary, absolutely necessary, for the welfare of those who may come after us as well as ourselves, that we no longer remain easily contented with the

mere literal sense of the Mosaic cosmogony, but that we rouse ourselves out of the lethargy we have fallen into, and strive for the discovery of its hidden meaning.

Those who make Scripture their study know full well how futile it is to confine themselves to only one, and that a natural and literal interpretation of the doctrines and records of the Old Testament writers. There remain but very few passages of Scripture now that have not been reviewed in various ways; and what glorious truths, "by this method of studying them," have been revealed! There are some portions, however, which have been left uninterpreted—passed over, it would seem, by our bishops and pastors, for obvious reasons; put by for a time, because their hour was not yet come.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

People, hitherto, have been simply contented with the literal sense of the Mosaic records, all the while nothing in the appearance of creation presented itself in opposition, or cast a doubt upon it, we have been satisfied, and thus have done the

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writer and author of the Pentateuch great injustice; we have acknowledged him to be an inspired writer without awarding his works a due share of spiritual interpretation. But the time has at length arrived for us reason-endowed beings to search the Mosaic testimony as well as other portions of Scripture, not remaining content and satisfied with its plain language, but earnestly setting ourselves to the task of discovering, beneath these apparently plain records, that in their straightforward simplicity seem more relating to terrestrial than celestial things—beneath this earthly veil a string of spiritual truths, woven and interwoven with expressions relating to natural circumstances and things, so delicately and subtly as almost to have become, in the usual course of reading, inseparable from them.

The time has at length come, I say, for man to be no longer content with this state of things—this knowing in part the contents of the Bible. Before he can advance another step in the sciences of geology, cosmogony, anthropology, and many other sciences, the cloud of uncertainty hanging over the literal form of the Mosaic testimony

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must be cleared away ; he must seek in Scripture reading to divest it of that natural form, and see in it a spiritual rather than an earthly signification, not *entirely* passing over the plain sense, or treating it as altogether unworthy of our notice, but considering it as we should the outward charms of a beautiful and accomplished person.

Exterior beauty of form and figure are the very first things to enlist our sympathies in favour of a new acquaintance. After a little while spent in their company, "unless in the meantime we discover in their dispositions sterling worth and goodness, equal to or surpassing the charms of their person," the effect of this outward loveliness is felt no longer, the spell is broken, and we turn, "if not with disgust," with utter indifference, from so much empty beauty. But if, on the other hand, loveliness of person be united to a truly noble, beautiful mind, we may continue in that presence every day in the year, and feel, at the end of a long acquaintance, more real actual sympathy and friendship towards the object of our admiration, than mere outward beauty alone could have called forth. It is thus with the language

of Scripture: we read it and read it day after day, the same passages, it may be, over and over again, yet always discover something new to rivet our attention and admiration. Why is this? Because it is like a beautiful person who is endowed with a beautiful mind. Outward beauty is seen at a glance; but it takes a long and intimate acquaintance to discover every grace and charm of the soul within. And Scriptural language, taking it in an undivided and perfect sense, bears a striking affinity to man in this one particular: both are possessed of an outward visible form or body, and also an inward spirit, acting as the soul in man, the spiritual sense in Scripture; hid by the body of flesh in the one, the body of literal record in the other.

It appears to me that many passages of Holy Scripture become in a great degree lost and unintelligible to the general reader, owing to the great error so many have fallen into, of being content to skim the surface rather than dive far down, even to the depths of the ocean, for that pearl of great price. The Bible, be it remembered, is not to be likened to a pan of milk: the rich cream

does not all rise to the surface. It resembles most the jewelled ocean-bed ; he who would find the rarest gem must dive the furthest down. And thus it happens that so many readers misunderstand biblical significations because human nature is so apt to lay stress upon the natural sense of the word rather than seek for that which is hid beneath it.

So long as Scriptural language is only understood by the majority of readers to contain a surface meaning, so long will the rarest, deepest, and most astounding truths contained in that sacred volume remain shut out from our mental vision. We must not think—that is, if we would thoroughly understand the Bible—to con over chapter after chapter of its contents with the same heedlessness school children so often adopt in learning and repeating their daily lessons. This method is certainly not the one to adopt in reading the Scriptures ; this irreverent manner is in itself a great crime, especially in those who know better. They are like the man who hid the talent in the earth, whose lord said of him, “ For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall

have abundance : but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”*

Wisdom and understanding have been given to man for the purpose of enabling him to exercise himself in all legitimate occupations worthy of his high calling ; and for those who feel they have a soul that will exist throughout eternity, how doubly expedient is it to exercise these great gifts ! to put them out to interest, “ as it were,” so that when their Lord shall come they may be in the enviable position of the servant who, because he had added five more talents to the five his master gave him, was commanded to enter into the joy of his Lord.

Partial comprehension of Scripture is all that will ever be attained by man, so long as he is content to pass over these apparent contradictory passages without energetically setting himself to the task of bringing out their spiritual significations. Blind ignorance of metaphorical language was the actual cause of so many of the Saviour’s parables being unintelligible to the Jews. Even his favoured disciples were unable to dive into

* Matt. xxv. 29 ; Luke viii. 18.


the secret meaning contained in them ; although, by virtue of their close intercourse with Him, they were enabled to understand and appreciate *many* of his sayings.

I have often wondered why our Lord chose to speak thus in parables ; but I wonder no longer. In this, as in many other peculiarities attached to his life, we may trace a great and grand purpose. The great and grand purpose bearing upon this frequent use of parable is evident : Jesus would awaken man's curiosity, and thus lead him to discover and hold fast the clue that should prove an unerring guide to the true interpretation of the Scriptures. Not only does the reading of them, and applying thereto none other than a literal sense, cause many passages to refute each other, but it has a yet greater evil, viz., that of affording to some ignorant minds a reasonable and legitimate excuse for that most unpardonable sin against the Godhead, atheism. For this latter reason, if for no other, it is our duty to search the Bible for those hidden things, that by this means we may enlighten our own minds, and disperse the cloud hanging over others, draw them from

their atheistic ideas, and rivet them, together with ourselves, firmly and entirely to a belief and creed as pure and beautiful as it is, in its perfect sense, comprehensive and holy.

There is ample room in this field of labour for our efforts. It is true the firmament of knowledge has received, of late, many additional lights; but there yet remains some dark corners, wanting the spark of illumination, wherein the humblest may, by ever so small an effort, contribute their mite towards its kindling.

Taking all things into consideration, it is scarcely a matter of wonder that geology and Biblical cosmogony fail to agree in their theories: both sciences are, as yet, in their infancy—have started, as it were, from opposite points of the compass; but it is to be hoped that before long they will simultaneously meet in the centre, attracted thither by the same sympathies which characterize the magnet and the needle; both are noble sciences, and repay us richly for labour expended on them; the one discovers the secret wonders of earth, the other portrays the mysteries of eternity; and it is as necessary to dive



into the depths of Scripture for the purpose of obtaining wisdom as it is to dive into the depths of the sea for pearls, or make deep excavations in the earth for diamonds.

The Saviour himself countenances our doing so. It was from none other source than his sacred lips flowed that authoritative command, "Search the Scriptures,"* which, if it were enough to give them a mere literal application—to read them in a plain A, B, C style, and see in them only historic records, "such as, for the most part, occupy the pages of the Old Testament"—where would be the necessity of search? We do not search for things that are plain and visible, nor such as we are already possessed with, but for those lying hid from our sight—things that we have lost, about which some amount of uncertainty hangs, or those that have not yet been discovered, but of whose existence we possess some slight knowledge.

When Christ bade us search the Scriptures, He did not restrict us to a partial investigation; the command implied a thorough and general search,

* John v. 39.

urging us to take those difficult portions, those which do not, in their plain or literal sense, appear to correspond with actual things, or such as science may bring to bear upon them, and by comparison with less intricate, more readily understood texts (of which ample has been given) bring out the lustre, the divine beauty they contain; those heavenly truths relating to man's eternal welfare, which were sent from heaven thus clothed and hid, because the inhabitants of earth were not yet prepared for their reception. And the holy prophets, being the servants of the Almighty, and instruments in his hands, were impelled, by the inspiration they received, to execute their work in this special manner, to the end that it might remain, until a time should come for man to strive, of his own freewill, to elevate himself out of the depths of abominations and spiritual darkness, a sealed book, probably the one represented in St. John's vision, which none were worthy to open but the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world; and he *has* opened them by His holy nativity, baptism, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and descent of the Holy Spirit.*

* Ephes. iv. 30.

All this has rent asunder the iron bonds of eternal death, and opened the seals of the Book of Life. St. Paul assures us that it was not permitted in past ages for man to understand the mysteries of Scripture, because, in those times, the Jews were the only people who acknowledged God, the rest of the great human family being heathens or Gentiles, whom the Jews held in the utmost possible contempt, and, in their arrogant, vehement bigotry, would fain have swept from off the face of the earth. They complaisantly felt themselves to be God's favoured people, and in this was their great error—that uncharitable persecution of those poor benighted heathens, whom they deemed unworthy of sympathy, or any other claim to humanity, and treated with even less kindness than they bestowed upon the beast of the field, not as co-heirs with them of eternal life, proved to be one of the chief clauses in the condemnation of that proud, powerful nation. The justice of the Almighty could not look with approval upon this uncharitable spirit so strongly manifest in the Jewish character, and therefore withheld from them much that they might have otherwise known, as a

special punishment. And further to humiliate and bow down their stiff necks, to let them see that He cared as much for the Gentiles as for them, that they were to be fellow-heirs of his body, and partakers of his covenants and promises as well as the Jews, He, the God of love, charity, and justice,* purposed in these latter times, by the instrumentality of his holy Apostles, to unfold these mysteries, and reveal them to the Gentile world.

Let us, then, see to it, that we despise not this glorious preferment; that we eagerly avail ourselves of the great blessings it has pleased God to pour down upon us, that by the aid of his holy Spirit, we may awake to the thorough understanding and comprehension of those mysteries, which aforetime were not made known unto the sons of men, but were secreted in safety beneath the veil, the apparently plain letter of natural facts, which, although containing in itself the soul, the mystery, the spiritual attribute, is so easily misapplied, so wrongly read by the majority of readers, as to fully realise St. Paul's doctrine and

* Eph. iii. 5, 6.

assertion, when he said, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." *

We will, therefore, take the opening chapter of the Bible, and see if we cannot discover, through its literal sense or letter, spiritual signification veiled in the language of comparison and allegory.

The first verse may be taken as the groundwork, the base and foundation of all the entire volume. "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." Who can deny that His pre-existing power dwelt, as our poor earth-bound understanding only can conceive, in the limitless regions of space; filling and encompassing chaos, until at length was produced the substance and form of the entire universe, comprising celestial and terrestrial spheres? Even—

"The untutor'd savage sees—

God in clouds and hears him in the breeze."

Man cannot, dare not, doubt the Creator's might. And I find in this first verse, nothing more than the plain fact, set before me, void of any secret meaning—the great and wonderful omniscience of God—the Trinity in Unity.

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

That the universe had a beginning is certain ; but, when we proceed to estimate the length of time occupied in its formation, I cannot help thinking our presumption leads us into many egregious errors. The six days' labour spoken of by Moses, without doubt, relates to six separate and distinct epochs, containing in each, very probably, millions of years ; such as now are used for the computation and division of time ; further than this, we are not permitted to know : God must ever remain in this vast, infinite, pre-existing knowledge, as far above the reach of human calculation, as the heavens are above the earth.* He permits us, to a certain extent, to exercise ourselves in the pursuit of scientific knowledge ; but we may always feel assured, that we incur his displeasure, and that we are not pursuing a right course, when our scientific theories are held up in opposition to scriptural truths ; and whenever such a state of things exists, when we cannot make scientific researches correspond with scripture, it is our duty to set ourselves to the task of ascertaining which of the

* Psalm lxi. 19.

two is wrong. Have we misapplied the facts, the new discoveries which by the aid of science have been revealed, and thus been led to base a wrong theory and construction upon them? Or have those scriptural texts, whose literal sense appear to war against our scientific theory, no really antagonistic qualities? being in themselves, through the medium of natural comparison, merely the body or letter of a spiritual signification, which, although clothed and conveyed in language apparently the bare record of natural occurrences and events, bear no relation whatever to the subject in question; and, by means of their relating in a far greater degree to things heavenly than earthly, are thus, without being robbed or perverted, rendered thoroughly neutral.

The assertion, that in the beginning *God* made heaven and earth, does not admit of one moment's doubt, but in this he was not alone, the *Father* presided over the great work, the *Son*, who is also the Lord Jesus Christ; the *word*; the *light*; *spake* by His Father, and the Holy Ghost *moved*: * these Three have, from before the creation of the

* Genesis i. 2.

world, formed that wonderful mysterious God-head, the Trinity,* represented, not in the person of the *Father*, but of the Son: man hath not heard *His* voice at any time, or seen *His* shape;† but the Holy Spirit, and the Son he has seen co-existing in a human form.‡ Moses was not even permitted to look upon God the Father. It was the Lord Jehovah, the Great I Am, the Second and Third co-equal members of the Trinity, the united Son and Spirit, with whom Moses and the Patriarchs were permitted to speak.

If we turn to the first chapter of Genesis, we shall see that it was the sixth day wherein mankind was created; but if we turn to the second chapter we read that, *after the seventh day's rest*, there was not a *man* to till the ground, and the Lord God had not caused it to *rain* upon the earth.

These two separate passages, though apparently relating to one and the same thing, are entirely distinct the one from the other (or rather I imagine them to be so). The one appears to relate to the creation and formation of the human race,

* John i. 2, 3, 4, 5. † John v. 37. ‡ John i. 32, 33.

those pre-Adamite beings, who, although moulded in the image of God (which was represented in the form it pleased our Lord and Saviour to adopt, when he presented himself visibly before our eyes), were not yet endowed with faculties enabling them to see beyond this earthly veil, and were by means of this deficiency of intellect, little superior to the beast of the field—probably they were (although formed in the image our Saviour afterwards adopted) creatures void of a spiritual existence, a superior kind of animal, upon whom had not yet rained the dew of celestial knowledge, among whom there was not a man to *till* the ground; was this ground the earth, the actual dust and clay of nature? * or did it represent the ground of their hearts? I leave the reader to judge for himself, which of these questions it were the most reasonable to answer in the affirmative.

“There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.”

This would seem to signify that the hearts of these pre-Adamite people were undergoing a

* Luke viii. 15.

change, becoming watered and fertilized by the dew of gentleness and compassion towards one another, and, by this means, becoming far removed from the level of the brute creation, although as yet this new faculty had not ripened into fruits, the heart of man (in the Maker's estimation) being still void, without any decided form, full of darkness, in its height, length, depth, and breadth.* This state of things seems to have remained for a time, until it pleased the Lord to breathe into man the breath of life, after the inhalation of which he became a living soul.† This passage corroborates my former statement, by inferring that man, before the advent of the breath (which is the Spirit of God), was *not actually* a partaker of the glories of eternity, but confined like the animals to but one existence.

The garden of Eden may be looked upon as being literally the pleasant spot wherein was actually placed His perfect masterpiece, the man who bore within him a living soul, and I know no reason why its exact position and boundary may not be traced by the Mosaic assertion upon our modern

* Ephesians iv. 18. † Ephesians, iv. 22, 23, 24.

maps. The trees which grew in the garden, pleasant to the sight, and good for food, are very beautiful, simple natural emblems. The tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life standing in the midst of the garden, are, in their subtile significance, entirely relating to the living soul implanted in man's breast by God ; but of this we will speak presently. I must first of all dive into more minute details respecting the man created during the sixth epoch, or, as Moses asserts, the sixth day. This first created being was made perfect, not in one form, but two: God created man in His own image—in the image of God created he *him*, *male* and *female*, created He *them* ; this implies that God does not look upon man as His perfect image in any other than a united form, realizing and sanctifying marriage.

Adam, the man created *after* the seventh day ; or rather taken, and formed of the dust of the ground, appears to be an entirely different creature from those who preceded him ; *he* was endowed with spiritual knowledge, *they* were not ; *he* knew how to till the ground and keep it, *they* had no sort of idea respecting husbandry, living

as the poor benighted heathen savages do, in the present day, relying, not upon their own industry, but wholly, helplessly, heedlessly, upon God's goodness—a deity they did not acknowledge, of whom they knew absolutely nothing ; and, worse than not being able to till the earth, they were incompetent to cultivate the ground of their hearts.

The man Adam having derived his bodily substance from the dust of the ground, shows us that he was the natural offspring of this earth-bound heathen race, but that he became, as it were, a new creature, born again, not after the flesh, but after the spirit ; as soon as God breathed into him the breath of life : not that which appertains to this world, which is our natural breath, but that never-dying soul which shall live for ever in joy or misery.

We gather from circumstantial evidence that, together with the living soul, God blessed Adam above other human beings, by vouchsafing to him a superior intellect and enlightenment concerning heavenly things ; seeing that he was permitted to both walk and talk with his Creator ! And

until man was thus endued with a soul, as well as a body, it would seem that he did not really and thoroughly reach unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, which perfect image could only be attained by unity of faith and a knowledge of the high attributes of God.*

This theory of the existence of pre-Adamite man is strongly supported in the history of Cain, who, being Adam's first-born, married and settled in the land of Nod. Who could have been his wife, other than one of these pre-Adamite women? A member of some heathen race, already located in the place he chose for an abode; moreover, when he was bewailing the enormity of his crime, he said,—“ And I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.”

The Lord's answer was, “ Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And he set a mark upon Cain, lest any one finding him should kill him.”

This passage *actually asserts* that there *were* other human beings beside Adam and his family

* Eph. iv. 13.

existing on the earth ; it also tells us that, dark blind, and heathen as they were, they, in spite of this brute-like ignorance, possessed some knowledge of moral law, and held the crime of murder in such great abhorrence as to condemn the criminal to the forfeiture of his own life.

In the sixth chapter, we again meet with a Scriptural acknowledgment of the fact in question. We read that the sons of *God* saw the daughters of *men*, that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose.

The sons of God? If all men were created in Adam, and none existed on earth before his day, how could such occurrences as those above recorded have taken place?

We are told in the New Testament* who the sons of God were, the generations of Adam. We also read that by uniting themselves with the pre-Adamite races, their posterity imbibed so much evil, as to cause God to repent that He had made man upon the earth, or aught else having natural life.†

I have before said, that it is evident God does

* Luke iii. 38.

† Gen. vi. 3, 5, 6, 7.

not view man as His perfect image, unless united with woman ; he is possessed of but a part of that likeness, since in God are united the power, greatness, superiority, and judgment appertaining to the one, with the gentleness, love, compassion, forbearance of the other ; it is not so much in the outward, as the inner man, that we should expect to realize that glorious image of God ; therefore, it is only by the union and influence of each separate attribute with the other, male and female, that the perfect man can exist.

Thus it was that Adam received at the hands of God an helpmeet in the form of woman, and she became unto him even as his own flesh. A truth, alas ! in these days, seldom realized, comprehended or acknowledged.

The record of woman, " that is, the Adamite female," having been formed by God from one of Adam's ribs, I should like to see divested of its literal sense, that man might behold its hidden beauties and see beneath the veil a spiritual form. The formation of woman from the rib of man, is illustrative of the close and complete union of two in one by marriage ; and it is also a repre-

sentation of the perfect union of Christ with his earthly bride, the Church.* Eve, the wife of the first Adam, forming with him the first Church of God, is represented as being the mother of all living (that is, all living in the knowledge and love of God). And the Christian Church, the bride of the second Adam, Christ, is in a still more perfect sense, the mother of believers now.

Thus, the Mosaic records of the one may be taken as an illustration of the other, and will very well bear to be deprived of their outer covering when so much to cheer and encourage lies hid beneath it.

The Church, both Jewish and Christian, has been tempted and deceived into sin and disobedience like unto Eve, not content to entrust herself entirely to the guidance of God, to continue in simplicity and innocence. She has gathered the forbidden fruit, hath partaken (against God's will) of the tree of worldly knowledge, has essayed to choose for herself between good and evil, and thus become reduced to the brink of ruin, dishonouring herself, and compel-

* Rev. xix. 7, 8.

ling her husband to share the disgrace. Ah ! has He not done so? by humbling Himself in our flesh,—by receiving and bearing the curse which would have been too intolerable for us to bear ; by which means He is even more closely united to His poor, frail, erring, but penitent wife, than He was before her fall—whose heart's desire, by His gracious sympathy, has become directed towards her husband ; she is happy and proud now to submit herself to His rule ; for, since the beginning, even unto this day, the Church has been the spouse of God.

I have already stated that the tree of knowledge of good and evil, is a similitude of earthly wisdom, which, when gathered by man, renders him proud, self-sufficient and impatient of God's higher rule.

The metaphor of the tree of life, shows that from the beginning, God intended this earth to be a preparatory state only ; it was against His Divine will that man should live for ever here ; He had already prepared a place more to be desired, as the eternal abode of the living soul ; and lest man, after partaking of earthly knowledge, both good and evil, should desire, or pine after, and thus induce

God to give him an eternity on earth, the Creator sent him forth from that pleasant place into the great world, where alone he could find that strange admixture of good and evil, of vicissitude and prosperity, of happiness and sorrow, that should make him less desirous of being chained to a perpetual earthly existence, and more anxious to do things pleasing in the sight of God, that he might thereby obtain the promised reward—a life after death—an eternal existence in Paradise, out of the reach of all that torment him here, where sin, sorrow, and death cannot enter.

Having to the best of my power analyzed the second and third chapters of Genesis, actually proving by Scripture, the very same Mosaic writings which of late have given rise to much dispute, the reasonableness and truth of the geologists' assertion, that man existed upon earth long before that being who was surnamed Adam, who was in truth nothing more or less than an instrument in the hands of Providence—the spring-head and originator of the Patriarchal, or Antediluvian Church, even as Christ was the foundation-stone of our own beautiful Christian faith.

Having done this, I will return to the contents of the opening chapter, and see if, by "raising the literal veil that hangs upon it," we cannot discover something entirely relating to a spiritual sense, bearing little or no affinity to natural events or things.

After the beginning, after the actual creation of the heaven and earth, Moses tells us that the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

If taken in a literal sense, how could this have been? Since, the instant anything is brought into existence, it betakes to itself a natural and substantial form. Heaven and earth was no longer chaos—how then could it have been without form, dark, and void?

It appears to me very plain, and I believe I have a legitimate basis for my opinions, that these three introductory chapters of the Bible do not really and actually relate to the natural process of creation; but that a similitude of all these things was taken by the great Israelitish Prophet for some great and grand reason, of which I have not the power to judge. Is it so very unreason-

able to suppose this? Are we not told in Scripture that the letter and the spirit have opposite interpretations? if so, let us put aside the one that we may realize the other.

Presuming that each of these days contained within itself thousands of years, which, when concentrated together, formed a separate and distinct epoch, we see that the vast universe was all created, every star in its proper place; everything upon earth and heaven, put within a certain limitation and rule, before the creation of God's masterpiece, man, *the pre-Adamite*; and that from the time of his creation, to that of the first dawn of civilization, and a knowledge of a supreme God, elapsed, most probably, thousands of years. Reader! I am confining my theory within very questionable limitations; it may be millions and tens of millions instead of thousands of years; but, be this as it may, I feel satisfied that this theory concerning the existence of a pre-Adamite human race ought to be sanctioned and received without any doubt or hesitation.

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And the earth was without form and void, and

darkness was upon the face of the deep ; but when the Spirit of God moved upon the waters, earth was no longer void and dark, but became illuminated ; lit up by its presence, filled with a glorious light ; the remnant of darkness that remained after the advent of light was not suffered to diminish the glorious effect of the latter by contact, a division was made, the light was called day, and the darkness, night.

It is very probable, and it is right that we should believe, that in the beginning God proceeded with the work of creation in the actual manner recorded by Moses, commencing with form and light, and proceeding from thence through the entire work, step by step, until the whole creation was rendered entirely and thoroughly complete. I say, it is our duty to accept this testimony as it has been given to us ; but it is also our duty to read that we may understand the striking and unmistakable reference it contains to that grand and final masterpiece of the Creator, our own immortal souls.

The word water is used by Moses to represent the turbulent passions of the human heart ; that

is, all its various affections and emotions. The earth, in like manner, represents the *heart*, being the base, ground, and foundation of life. The soul of man, which before the beginning of a knowledge of God was spiritually without form, dark and void, as soon as that knowledge or spirit moved upon the water, became formed, ay! even in the glorious image of its Maker, no longer dark, but flooded with celestial light—no longer void, for God Himself was the fulness thereof.

It is nothing more than a natural result, that men having their souls filled with this spiritual light, should instinctively separate themselves from those stubborn, blind disbelievers who would not receive the doctrine of life and light, preferring rather to grope on from the cradle to the grave in heathenish blindness and ignorance. Such opposite characters and temperaments, it were impossible to blend in perfect union; and, rather than the darkness should cloud and cast a disfiguring gloom over the beautiful light, it were well that a natural, insurmountable barrier should be placed between them. Moreover, we read that God saw

the light that is was good ! He created both, was the origin of the one as well as the other ; but these expressions of approval were not used in connection with the darkness. And why ? because night, darkness, blindness, and death, are symbols of evil, the literal representations of sin and hell.

We have arrived at the conclusion of the first epoch or era in man's improvement, wherein he takes the first step towards civilization. The pre-Adamites were, without doubt, although belonging to the human family, a race of beings scarcely removed from the brute, existing in a state of animal nature, having but a small amount of reason wherewith to govern themselves, smaller perhaps, than the savage aborigines of Australia or Africa are endowed with now.

These days, epochs, or eras (whichever the reader pleases to term them) began with the evening and terminated with the morning ; whereas, really, a natural day commences with the dawn of morning, and ends with the dusk of night, which continues until the dawn of the following day : the prophet in this instance, reversed the usual

course or succession of light and darkness, day and night, to show the gradual progress taking place, the gentle yet visible change in the human heart, which was then beginning to emerge out of the dusk, the darkness of spiritual blindness, into the bright dawn of understanding and belief.

Before proceeding further with this interpretation of the Mosaic Cosmogony, we will strive to determine what this seventh day's rest, in its hidden sense, related to.

Was it not a type, the foreshadowing, of a time yet to come? When God would leave off striving with his creatures, when He would no longer *force* them to believe on Him by prophecy or miracle; a day wherein, human wisdom excelling, they would be adequate to the task of choosing for themselves the course to follow good or evil—wherein He would grant them the power to exercise their own free will, even in this essential point.

Assuredly the prophet was telling of *this era*. The great work of creation and redemption was not completed until Christ ascended from earth to heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father. He is resting now; the age of Christianity is the day of

rest, wherein the Holy Trinity desist from their more active labours, to engage in a quiet survey, and watch the grand issue of events ; the trial and triumph of good over evil in the heart of that being, who was created in the image it pleased the Son of God to adopt, when He descended from heaven, a real personal atonement for the sins and shortcomings of those who were created in His image, whose likeness He was.

I have attempted to describe the spiritual signification of the first day, and its works, and will now proceed onward.

“ God said let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

“ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were under* the firmament from the waters which *were above* the firmament. And God called the firmament Heaven.”

The waters, as I have before said, are a type of human affections and desires.

The firmament God called Heaven, answers to that innate knowledge of good and evil, termed by man the conscience, planted in his soul to

enable him to discriminate, to divide as it were, the sinful carnal desires, which are (or should be) held in subjection under the conscience, from those good and holy aspirants heavenward; which soar highest, and instead of sinking beneath the firmament, float far above it, having no need of curb or rein.

Thus ended the second stage or day. "And God said, let the waters under the heaven be gathered unto one place, and let *dry land* appear." The dry land was called earth, and the waters were called seas, the one being, as I have before said, a type of the human heart, and the other in an equal degree emblematic of its various emotions.

By the gathering together of the waters under the firmament, I perceive the visible check and restraint of evil passions and carnal desires, which, by God's grace, since the first dawn of spiritual light in the world, has been, "speaking in a general sense," kept under, confined within due limits. Before the advent of God's Spirit, ignorance, evil passions, and lusts were without bounds; man possessed no conscience to distin-

tinguish between right and wrong, darkness covered the face of the deep; but as soon as a knowledge of God became manifest, together with a desire for spiritual things, the firmament of conscience was given him, that he might divide the good from the evil, and know them apart.

The dry land appearing after the collection of the waters under the firmament shows the soul during its state of regeneration, and points to the manner whereby each individual may, if they do but exercise the will, control their evil propensities and gather them together into a smaller compass, until the ground of their hearts be rendered capable of producing herbs, flowers, and fruits—offerings of repentance and love to the great, merciful Creator! Not only this, but the seed of each separate virtue, thus cultivated, was to be duly yielded, that by reproduction they might be multiplied. How necessary is it, then, for each one of us to cultivate virtue, to exterminate wickedness and vice, that we may transmit to our children and our children's children germs of goodness, which, by being transmitted to and reproduced in them shall cause, them to bless our

memory, and be as a sweet smelling savour ascending from earth to heaven.

The lights in the firmament represent the bright examples given in the lives and deeds of good and holy persons, especially the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, all of which are, in truth and reality, illuminating lights to the whole world.

The great light ruling the day is emblematic of the great Son of God, and His spouse the Christian Church. The lesser light ruling the night, may be taken in like manner as a representation of him who was the herald of the great Son of God (John the Baptist), who penetrated the thick darkness of the Jewish creed with a light, actually borrowed from the Son, of which the beautiful moon is a faithful and constant reminder, since it, too, borrows from the sun the light it pours upon the darkened portions of the globe.

The stars no man can number ! yet these also borrow their light from the sun, and are of various degrees of magnitude, some so small as scarcely to be seen, others large and brilliant. Oh ! what beautiful and striking emblems are

these of the innumerable stars that twinkle upon earth; gentle angel spirits, so modest as to escape our observation, yet good withal, equal in beauty, though unequal in splendour to those aspiring unto the dignity of planet.

We come now to the creation of living things, fish first. And we find this assertion of Moses fully agreeing with all recent discoveries made by geologists. This class of living things was, undoubtedly the first to exist upon our globe; the frequency with which fossil fishes, fragments of petrified bones and marine shells are excavated, go far to prove the literal sense of the Mosaic assertion actual and true; but, in accepting this, we must not lose sight of the veiled meaning this assertion contains. The word fish, in a spiritual signification, represents that cold apathy towards religion so frequently and painfully manifest in the lives of *professing* Christians, who, although basking in the light of day, amid all that should warm that cold-blooded indifference, persist in maintaining it, or, what is even worse, become of that lukewarm* temperament so un-

* Rev. iii. 16.

satisfactory and deceiving to ourselves, as well as others, of which we have a representative in the natural history of whales, seals, &c.; these are classed amongst the mammalia, but in reality partake equally of both natures—are a link, as it were, between the cold-blooded fish and the warm-blooded animal.

The winged fowl shows the first voluntary effort made by man to ascend out of that cold, or lukewarm apathy—his understanding soars above the earth, in the open space between that and heaven, whither it aspires; content no longer to grovel here, his spirit unfolds its pinions, rising higher and higher, until it finds itself, like the weary-winged lark, compelled to return to earth again. Thou art earth-bound now, and may not soar beyond the limits of thy state, yet faint not, oh, soul! in these efforts to reach the goal of bliss; though disappointed, discouraged, and wing-weary you descend now, a time will come for you to leave earth altogether—the link will be broken, and you will be free!

We must needs look upon winged fowls as a favourable picture of the state of man's desires.

The Spirit of God* descended in this form upon our Saviour, a dove brought tidings to Noah of the abatement of the flood, Elijah was fed by ravens ; not any of these have evil significations, but are used as emblems to show the beneficial influence of holy, heavenward desires.

The beasts of the earth portray mankind as being endowed with a greater amount of understanding, livelier instincts, and more acute sensibilities ; but, with this advance in spirit, natural animal passions spring up stronger than ever, to rival and counterbalance, or keep in subjection, the spirit under the flesh. Venomous and destructive insects and reptiles, answering to the creeping things of creation, become engendered by the encouragement of vice to such an extent, as to poison and embitter the existence of mankind.

The reader may ask, wherefore, then, did God pronounce all these things so very good ? seeing that they represent evil as well as good ? I answer—everything spiritual and invisible has a natural representation which is visible, every minute creature and thing created by God for

* Matt. iii. 16.

His own pleasure was pleasant to Him, nothing was amiss, every iota was perfect! but since Satan, the king of evil, owes his creation and existence to God, having been first of all an angel of light, it is plain that his influence over man, was fore-ordained before the world was, that we might the more perfectly and effectually be empowered with the privilege of choice between good and evil: the latter is permitted and tolerated by the Almighty, but not sanctioned, that we, being free agents, may prove by overcoming these temptations our worthiness of God's favours, and a place in Paradise among his chosen people.

The creation of man in the Maker's image is without exception the most beautiful metaphor contained in Scripture. Whenever it pleased God to appear in a visible form to men, it was in the figure and stature of a man, long before the actual adoption of our flesh. Abraham beheld *three* men answering to the Trinity, and he addressed them as such, three in one; the Lord spake, and Abraham answered as though there stood before him one man, for he said, " My *Lord*, if now I have found favour in *thy* sight,

pass not away, I pray thee from thy servant ; ” but in the next verse he says, “ Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest *yourselves* under the tree.”

These, and the like passages, prove that man actually *was* formed in the likeness of God, but at what date we cannot determine. Moses, it would seem, did not attach any importance to the chronology of this question—evidently it was deemed unnecessary to adduce it, or the inspired writer of the Pentateuch had no occasion to make use of it as the body or veil of a spiritual sense ; else most surely the exact date of human creation would have been given in a very different form, I presume, to that record which is now the subject of so much controversy, and so many varied speculations, telling of the creation of Adam, which, according to the chronological table, took place four thousand and four years before the birth of Christ. Scripture gives ample proof of the existence of man long prior to this date, for earth was peopled with the sons and daughters of *men* ; but the living soul, the spirit of God was wanting in them, consequently *the whole creation*

(of which man is a living type or representation) was in the sight of God without form, void and dark, though, naturally, "without doubt," earth and its contents were as vivid and pleasant then to the eyes of men as it is now, everything as perfectly and beautifully proportioned—the garb of nature as brilliantly varied, yet, by reason of the darkness and void of man's heart, it was a thing of chaos in the estimation of the Almighty, let *us* take care that it does not become so again ! for it would, indeed, be a most deplorable and hopeless condition.

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St. Paul (and we have every reason to suppose that he was familiar with the Mosaic Cosmogony) assures us that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life ; moreover all right-minded persons will acknowledge that every portion of Scripture is given to guide mankind in the way to heaven ; and, therefore, it ought not to be looked upon as a mere chronicle of events, a history. These literal statements may, to a certain extent, be taken ; but when they threaten to clash with the unimpeachable assertions of science and research,

depend upon it, we err greatly in laying stress on the natural figure ; it is proof sufficient that we have not yet arrived at the core of the passage in question, and that Scripture needs to be searched as well as nature, that its deepest and most subtile beauties and truths may be revealed. When this is thoroughly done, and not till then, shall we comprehend the height, depth, length, and breadth of the Almighty and His glorious works.

It is not God's will, rest assured, that Scripture is thus used to contradict the revelations of science ; the one He gave to be our guide from earth to heaven, and teach us the means whereby all may save their souls alive. Alas ! I fear there is nothing upon earth so grievously ill-used as the book of life, by being heedlessly read ; so much so that its natural illustrations are taken in preference to the more precious things relating to eternity, of which these natural pictures are but the bodies or types ; these are they which clash with the assertions of geology, and cause us to stand with gaping mouths, wondering at the unaccountable things that are taking place around us. I grant that it is right and justifiable for

man to accept without scruple or doubt every iota of Scripture which his earthbound mind is unable to fathom or discover therein a spiritual and secret signification ; that is, being that which our Saviour specially blessed, a little child ; for we are exercising the same implicit, simple faith and confidence toward God, which is the particular characteristic of childhood—little children's faith in parental care and love is an example of what man's should be towards his Maker.

The capacity for diving into the wonders of creation, of knowing and comprehending them, is one of the greatest blessings with which man, is endowed ; the geologist can tell you how great is the pleasure he derives from the pursuit of his favourite science ; as also can the astronomer, the naturalist, and all others who make the study of various branches of science the attendant of their solitary hours, and subjects of discussion and conversation with companions and friends. It is, indeed, a delightful privilege to be able to read creation, to have it spread as the pages of an open book before our eyes and understanding ; to comprehend how the various stratas forming the base

of our globe were piled and built one upon the other, until the whole fabric was rendered firm and complete, fit for the reception and reproduction of animal and vegetable life.

The pursuit of science, "independent of revealing the mighty and minute wonders and mysteries of creation," has shown itself to be the specially appointed medium, chosen by God for the dissipation of that cloud which, for so many ages, has hung over the understanding of both Jew and Christian; the conclusions so frequently arrived at, and the reasonableness of theories adduced from newly discovered facts, have naturally awakened in the minds of reflective persons a species of doubt (*not disbelief*) respecting the real and actual veracity of that account of the creation given by Moses. Hitherto this has been looked upon as a plain, simple statement of the manner in which God made the world and all its contents. A hundred years ago religionists would have been shocked at the bare probability of doubting the Mosaic Cosmogony. Now, it is a theme for warm public discussion. Men of talent and learning openly express their opinions, and hesitate not, but

boldly and emphatically declare with St. Paul that the *letter* killeth but the *spirit* giveth life ; if so, the literal sense, which is the letter, must only be received as the medium of conveyance to our natural understanding of the spiritual things of God ; and we do what He intended we should not do, when we look upon the Bible as a chronicle of natural events.

It occurs to me that in a former page I stated the literal account of the exact spot where the garden of Eden stood may be taken ; it is very probable that this was the place from whence sprung the first Church of God, represented in the image of Adam and his bride ; not the Jewish Church, for Abraham is the acknowledged father and founder of their creed ; but one prior to the existence of this, of which Noah and the patriarchs were members ; but with the letter we must also take the spirit. What was the garden of Eden a representation of, and the four rivers formed by partitions of the one that flowed out from it ?

In reply to these questions I adduce a beautiful hymn met with in a miscellaneous collection for

the use of the Church. Who the author is I know not; it is full of sweetness, and, I doubt not, is the outpouring of some well-regulated, pious mind:—

“Come, pure hearts, in sweetest measures
Sing of those who spread the treasures
In the holy gospels shrined;
Blessed tidings of Salvation,
Peace on earth their proclamation—
Love from God to all mankind.

“See the rivers four that gladden
With their streams the better Eden,
Planted by our Lord most dear;
Christ the fountain, these the waters,
Drink, O Sion’s sons and daughters,
Drink and find Salvation here.

“O, that we, thy truth confessing,
And thy holy word possessing,
Jesus, may thy love adore!
Unto thee our voices raising,
Thee with all thy ransomed praising,
Ever and for evermore.”

THE END.







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- This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor discoloration and faint smudges, characteristic of old paper. The left edge of the page is bound into a dark, possibly black or dark brown, cover. There is no text or other markings on the page.